

**DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



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Dear Colleague:

The Montana Cardiovascular Health Program and the EMS and Trauma Systems Section, which are part of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, are pleased to announce the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) stroke/cardiac report, "Time-Sensitive Response to Cardiovascular Events in Montana." The file can be viewed at <http://montanacardiovascular.mt.gov> under "Reports."

Telephone surveys were completed by Montana Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and First Responders in 2006 and 2009. Comparisons of survey results assessed changes in the capacity of Emergency Medical Services staff to identify and treat stroke.

Major findings included significant improvements in:

- Availability of a stroke protocol in their service, training in the use of a stroke screening, and use of a stroke screening tool.
- The percentage reporting that they had adequate knowledge level about stroke.

The 2009 survey also obtained baseline information on pre-hospital care of cardiac patients and found several opportunities for improved care:

- Less than 30% reported that their service had 12-lead ECG devices in their vehicles that transport suspected heart attack patients.
- Barriers in transmitting 12-lead ECG readings included technology limitations and geographic "dead spots."

In collaboration with the Stroke and Cardiac Workgroups, the Cardiovascular Health Program will continue to address care of stroke and cardiac patients. Efforts include expanding telestroke capabilities in rural hospitals; providing cardiovascular continuing education to EMTs, dispatchers and health professionals; and offering 12-lead ECG pre-hospital trainings.

For more information about the survey or the stroke and cardiac initiatives, contact Crystelle Fogle with the Cardiovascular Health Program at cfogle@mt.gov, (406) 947-2344.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Crystelle Fogle".

Crystelle Fogle, MBA, MS, RD
Program Manager, Montana Cardiovascular Health Program